

67
027
A SERMON

made at Blanford Fo-
rū , in the Countie of
Dorset on Wensday the
17. of Ianuarij last past at
the Session holden there,
before the honorable and
the worshyppefull of that
Shyre, by *William Kethe*
Minister and Preacher
of Gods word.

1571.

AT LONDON
Printed by Iohn Daye,
dwellyng ouer Aldersgate.

¶ Cum gratia & Priuilegio
Regiz Maiestatis.

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Minister of the

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1671.

AT LONDON

Printed by John Davis

dwelling over Aldersgate

Comptrolers & Printers

Regist. Masters

♀ To the right honora-
 ble my very good Lord Am-
 brose, Earle of Warwike, Baron
 Lisle, of the most noble order of the
 Garter, Knight, general of the Q. Ma-
 jesties Ordinaunce within her high-
 nes Realmes and dominions, his
 most humble seruaunt William
 Kerke, wisheth grace mercy
 and peace in the Lord.



When as I confide-
 red (right honorable)
 how many godly, and
 notable workes, had ben
 set forth by excellent lear-
 ned men, to the great
 utility, and profite of such as should with
 an bright iudgement studiously reade
 them: I determined with my selfe, and
 thoughte it sufficient for discharge of my
 conscience, if I wholly employed that sim-
 ple talent committed vnto me, in prea-
 ching the word, (though simply, yet sin-
 cerely) according to that function, wher-
 unto I am called. And so it came to passe
 by the good prouidence of God, that on
 Wednesday, being the 17. day of this
 A. M. moneth

The Preface

month of January. I preached at Blandford Forum, in the Countie of Dorset, at the Session holden there, where both the honorable, and many of the worshipfull, which harde me, tooke my simple trauels in very good part, as both then, and since I haue well perceiued. Nevertheless, sundry, not onely of the multitude, but some of higher calling so much misliked my sayd Sermon, that they thought I spake somewhat more then became me, but yet I prayse God that those which take the matter most greuously, are but pottle companions, who thinke that I haue done them an exceeding great injury for that I opened to the Magistrates, how shamefully the Saboth day (which God would haue to be kept holy) was prophaned with drunken and vngodly reueling, and all kinde of iniquitie, in so much that some are cast, (I know not how,) into such a heate therewith, that it seemeth, they want but the chaynge and turne of tyme, to put me in a greater heat then they themselves would be in willingly, who also by their sinistrall reportes of my Sermon, would very fauourably cause others which heard me not, to be of their owne corrupt, and peruerse iudgements. I haue therefore thought it expedient

The Preface.

pedient and not without aduise & counsaile, to call to my remembraunce my sayd Sermon, and to commit the same to writing (and to the iudgements of the godly) wherein I haue vsed such diligēce if I be not much deceaued, that such as heard it shal finde not very many things added, but yet lesse left out or omitted, certainly, to my knowledge not one sentence.

And now (right honorable) if I should follow that laudable custome of the learned, which commonly do dedicate their works to such personages as they thinke to be most worthy, and to such as be of honour, or worship, beyng desirous to further vertue, and the sincere religio of Iesus Christ, with the fauourers of the same: To whom should I dedicate these my poore simple trauels but to your honour, who being not onely my especiall good maister and Lorde, as full oft I haue felt, but also vnder God and the Quenes Maiestie, one of my chiefe protectours and defenders agaynst all such as would offer me iniury?

And although I should laye a part all those respectes, yet (my case standing as it doth) I know not to whome by better right I should dedicate this my Sermon

A. iij.

then

The Preface.

then to your honour, who among many other, both honorable and worshipfull witnesses with me, that for the tyme I was with you in Newhauch the minister and preacher there, and also this last yeare with you in the North partes, one of the preachers of the Queenes Maiesties armie, I vsed at both places, when occasion was offered to speake plainly before your honor and the rest, and yet not forgetting I trust, before whome I spake, yea and when I sawe that great necessitie so required, and that duetie bane me thereto, I practised (your honour well knoweth) a certeyne kind of discipline, euen vpon those, that by birth and parentage were farre aboue me. I do willingly and of set purpose put your honour in mynde of these thinges (which otherwise might full well haue bene buried in oblivion) to the entent, that when such as shall make me for telling truth, shall vnderstand, that as well your honour, as a great many of other, men of high calling in this common welth, Gentlemen and Captaynes of great worshippinge, actiuitie, courage, & valiantnes, besides the multitude of common Souldiers, were not onely well pleased with my plaine speech among the, in preaching against abuses,

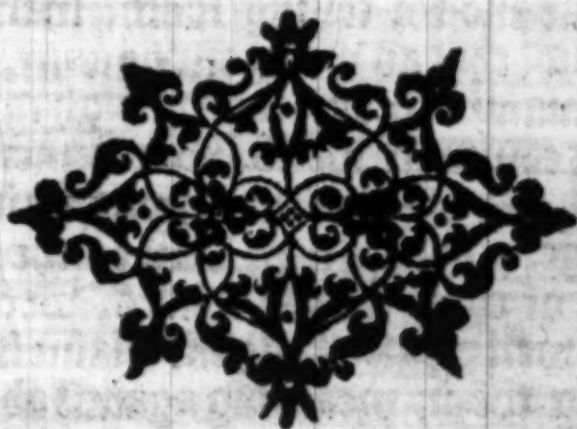
but

The Preface.

but also willing to redresse the same, and to shew them very honorable, & worshipfull towardes me both in word & deede, for my plainenes with them: It may be that these men (by such a president before their eyes) will somewhat qualifie and content theselues forasmuch as betwene such as I haue named, and them, (if the question be for worship, office or dignitie) I see not well how there may be any comparision. Our heauenly father preserve your honour with all yours, and graunt you the continuance of his loue and fauour. Amen.

At Childockford this xxix. of January. 1570.

Your Lordships most humble
seruant, William Keth, mini-
ster of Gods worde.



**A Sermon made at
Blanford Forū, in the
Countie of Dorset on Wens-
day the 17. of Ianuari last past
at the Session holdē there. &c.**

*If I had not come and spoken vnto
them, they should not haue had sinne,
but now they haue no cloke for the y^r
sinners. &c.* John. 15.
vers. 22.



Ur Sauour
Christ in this xv. of
S. John doth not
onely put his Apo-
stles in mind what
great troubles wer
to come vpon them for the pro-
fession of his name, but he also
sheweth, what shuld moue those
persecutours so to bere & to trou-
ble them. Hęc omnia facient vobis John. 16.
13.
propter nomē meum, quia non no-
uerunt eum qui misit me: *All these
thynges*

A Sermon preached

thynges shall they doe vnto you, for my names sake, bicause they haue not knowen him which sent me. But least any mā should thinke that those wicked persecutours should vnder coulour of ignoraunce excuse the selues, Christ our Sauour in these wordes that I haue read vnto you, cōuinceth them, by iij. notable reasons or Arguments, prouyng their ignoraunce not to be simple, but rather wilfull and malicious, much lyke vnto such as at noone day will of set purpose, close their eyes bicause they will not see the light. Christ by his first reason or Argument proueth that they were enemyes to his doctrine in these wordes. Si nō venissem, & locutus fuisset eis, peccatum non haberent. Nunc autē non habent quod pretextant peccato suo. *If I had not come and spoken*

vnto

Three Ar-
gumentes
to conuince
the Phari-
sees.

unto them (sayth Christ) they should
not haue had sinne, but now they haue
no cloke for their sinne.

By the 2. Argument Christ
proueth that they were the very
enemies of God, in hatyng hys
person as they dyd, bicause of his
doctrine taught amōg thē. Ther
fore he sayth. Qui me odit, is & pa-
trē meū odit, he that hateth me, ha-
teth my father also. For the father and
I am one.

The thyrd Argument
sheweth how they contemned
his wonderfull workes, such was
their hatred both to his doctrine
and person. Si opera non fecissem
inter eos, quę nemo alius fecit, pec-
catum non haberent &c. If I had
not done workes among them, which no
other mā dyd, they should not haue had
sinne. &c.

But bicause tyme will not li-
tence me to prosecute these three

Argu-

A Sermon preached

The notes
gathered of
the first Ar
gument.

No cloke
where the
Gospell is
preached.

Argumentes of Christ agaynst
them, I will stay onely vpon the
first Argument, requestyng you
to obserue three notes that may
be gathered of the same. The
first is that no mā can be excused
before God by ignorance, though
he haue not heard the word. The
2. is, that where the word hath
sounded, there can no man haue
a cloke for his sinne. The thyrde &
last note is to shewe you what
startyng holes the wicked haue
to auoyde their sinne, and what
shiftes they haue to put theyr
sinnes to other, or to escape pu-
nishment for sinne, though to
their owne confusion. But that
I may haue grace so to entreate
of these thinges as may be to the
glory of God, and to the edifica-
tio of such as are present, I shall
desire you that we all may ioyne
to

together in prayer. And in these
our prayers. &c.

Si nō venissem, & locutus fuisset.

The first thing I wished you
to obserue vpon this first argu-
ment of Christ, was this, that
ignorance should excuse no man
before the iudgement seate of
Christ, which assertion although
it may be confirmed by many
places of the scriptures, yet one
or two places I trust may suf-
fice at this present. We reade in
in the 3. and 33. of Ezechiel,
where God vsing a similitude
from the warres sayth thus. If I
bring the sword vpon a land, if the peo-
ple of that land take a mā from among
them, and make him their watchman,
if when he seeth the sworde come vpon
the land, he blow the trumpet & warne
the people: Then he that heareth the
sound

Ezech. 3.
17. and
Cap. 33. 12.

A Sermon preached

founde of the trumpet, and will not be warned, if the sworde come and take him away, his bloude shall be vpon hys owne head: but if the watchman see the sworde come and blowe not the trumpet, and the people be not warned, if the sworde come and take away any person from among them, he is taken away for his iniquitie, but his bloud will I require at the watchmans hand. The Lord turneth frō the similitude to the prophet, and to all others which shoulde take vpon them the office of teaching his people, putting them in minde of their duties; which is to tell the people their sinnes: if beyng tolde, they repent not, their bloud shall be vpon their owne heades: but if for want of warning the people perishe, the shall their blouds (as the prophet sayth) be required at the watchmans handes.

S.

The office
and duetie
of a
watchman.

Then we
be vnto
blynd and
ignoraunt &
slouthfull
guides.

S. Paule also in the first to the
 Romaines, affirmeth, that foras-
 much as that which may be knowne of
 God is manifest in them (for God hath
 shewed it unto them) and that the in-
 visible things of him, that is, his eter-
 nall power and Godhead, are seene by
 the creation of the world, being consi-
 dered in his workes, to the entent that
 they should be without excuse. These
 and such places of Scripture do
 take all excuse from the sondes of
 men, although they have not
 heard the sounde of the Gospell.
 So that, if traytors and rebels,
 rebell against their lawfull Ma-
 gistrates, although they neuer
 heard or red that of Paule in the
 13. to the Rom. Let every soule be
 subiect to the higher powers. &c. Or
 that of S. Peter the first Epist.
 and 2. chapt. Submit your selues un-
 to all manner of ordinances of men, for
 the

printed at
 the shoppe of
 I. I. I.

Rom. 1. 19.
 and 20.

Rom. 13. 11.
 1. Pet. 2.

A Sermon preached

the Lordes sake. Yet notwithstanding, like as it cannot excuse the before the iudgement seate here in earth to pleade ignoraunce, and that they thought it not to be so heynous a cryme to rebell, no more can it excuse the before God. For the very lawe of nature shall suffice to condemne them of ingratitude.

*A warning
to Magi-
strates.*

The Magistrates in like manner, where as God hath placed them in authoritie to p^rend they should defend the innocent, and punish the wicked, if they, taking their pleasures, never seeke to know their duties; out of Gods worde; but for lacke of knowledge of God, and p^r lawes of the realme; or the common weale wherein they are Magistrates, do punish the godly and maine

mainteine the wicked, can ignorance excuse them, either before God or man? no, no, for though they neuer heard that in the law,

Thou shalt not in iudgement bow to the right hand, nor to the left hand, and

that of the Prophet in the second

Psalme, *Be ye learned O ye rulers of*

the earth. Yet shall the lawe of

nature condemne them, which

teacheth them to helpe others, as

they would be holpen the selues.

ad q̄st̄onē ston̄ q̄mōn̄ yd̄

And the same may be sayde of

the ministers of the Church, and

such as might to be the feeders of

Christes flocke, of whom God by

the Prophet Malachy saith, that

their lips should prelerue knowe

ledge. If such should enter into

the ministry, not for any zeale,

but for ease, for liuing, and for

worldly respectes (as a number

q̄m̄

B. j.

do)

Exod. 23. 3

Leuiticus.

29. 65.

Deu. 1. 178

16. 16.

P̄ro. 24. 23

Psal. 2. 10.

Iam. 2. 2.

The Church is full of such whiche would to God they might bee thrust out & good men let alone.

A Sermon preached

Do) being beastly, ignorant, & farre frō that knowledg which the Lord requireth: certainly, it is so farre of, that this their ignorance shall excuse them before God, that it shall suffice deeply to condemne them. And thus much shortly touching the first note, vpon these wordes of our Saviour, where he sayth: *If I had not come.* &c.

The second note.

The second note teacheth vs that where the word hath sounded in mē's eares, there can they not bring ignorance, or any other thing to excuse them, or to cloke their sinne, yet the wordes of Christ be such, as some might thinke the contrary. For Christ sayth, *If I had not come and spoken vnto them, they shoulde not haue had sinne.* But the whole scope of the scrip

Scriptures do euidently proue, that ^{No man} no man euer was, is, or can be ^{without} without sinne, the sonne of God onely excepted.

And the holiest men that euer were, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Dauid, Daniell, and Job, felt their great imperfectiōs, acknowledging them selues to be earth & ashes, desiring God not to weye their iniquities, nor to enter into iudgement with the. Christ therefore in this place of S. John, dischargeth not men of all sinne, though he had not come vnto them, but now that he came and spake vnto them, & they not to make their profite of his comming, he now chargeth them with wilfull sinne, wyth ^{wilfull} sinne, oblique ^{sinne, oblique} sinne, & the sinne ^{nate sinne,} of infidelitie. ^{& the sinne} of infidelitie.

B.ij.

In

A Sermon preached

1. John 9.
2. 3. &c.

In the ix. Chap. of John the
Disciples aske Christ, who had sin-
ned either he that was borne blinde, or
his parentes? but Christ answereth that
neither he, nor his parentes had sinned,
but that the workes of God should bee
shewed on him. And yet who know-
eth not that both the blinde man
and his parentes were sinners as
other men. But Christ in saying
to the Jewes they should not
haue had sinne, sayd as much as
as thus vnto them.

If I had not come among you
accordyng to the very tyme ap-
poynted, at the place before spo-
ken of, and of the linage before
propheesied, if I had not preached
vnto you, if I had not done such
miracles as no other man dyd,
then might you haue pleaded ig-
norauce though it should not al-
to

together haue excused you: but
now that I haue accomplished
all thinges that were before told
you, what so euer ye now shal al-
ledge in the defence of your sel-
ues, it shal not cleare you, nor dis-
charge you of wilfull and obste-
nate sinne.

Now I will be so bold before
your honors and worshipps to ap-
ply these wordes of Christ, as the
present tyme doth offer occasion.

There are in this our coun-
trei many thynges farre out of
frame, & though I can not touch
all, yet some of them I purpose
to lay before you, beseechynge you
to consider of them. And here I
mynde not to make rehearsall
what shamefull, and trayterous
libels are cast abroad, or set vp in

B. iij.

the

A Sermon preached

Trayte =
rous libels
set vp by
Papistes.

How the
Ministers
are handled
by the Pa-
pistes for
not consen-
tyng to su-
perstition.

the chief Townes of this shyre,
by seditious and wicked Papi-
stes agaynst such as professe the
Religion, bicause they are as yet
vnknownen: neither do I mynde
to shewe you how shamefully, &
cruelly the poore Ministers of
this countrey are misused (I
meane not the Dissemblyng Pa-
pistes whiche can counterfayte
to serue the time, for they haue to
much ease) how some are threat-
ned, some imprisoned, I know
not by what law, and some put
in daunger of lyfe, bicause they
will not consent to superstition.
As for these thyngs (bicause they
bee matters as some say tou-
chyng the Church) the ordina-
ries should reforme. But I pur-
pose to open vnto you such abu-
ses as to you the reformation
thereof doth belong. It hath
plea-

pleased God to make you Magistrates and fathers of this countrey, not onely to see that common quietnes be kept among the people, but also that God might haue his due honoz and glozy, so that as the Ministers office is to exhort and reprove by the word, your office is to defend the good, and to punishe by the sword, I meane to execute iustice vpon such as transgresse the lawes of God.

The office of the Minister, and the office of the Magistrate.

The Lord God hath commanded, and so do the lawes of this Realme that the Sabbath day should be kept holy, that the people should cease from labour, to the end they should heare y^e word of God, and geue them selues to godly exercises, but custome and sufferance hath brought it to passe that the multitude do most

The abuse of the Sabbath day.

B.iiij.

shame

A Sermon at preached

The Sab-
both day
turned into
a Reuelyng
Day.

Shamefully prophane the Sab-
both day, & haue altered the very
name therof, so as where god cal-
leth it his holy sabaoth, the mul-
titude call it there reuelyng day,
whiche day is spent in bulbea-
tings, bearebeatings, bowlinges,
dicynge, cardynge, daunsynges,
drunkennes, and whoredome.

If these shamefull disorders
haue bene kept from your know-
ledge, yet are you sinners before
god: but if you haue heard of the,
and haue yet suffred them, or if
ye shall frō henceforth now that
you haue heard of it, suffer it:
Then these woordes of Christ
touch you very neare, who spea-
keth yet out of his Scriptures
vnto you, and out of my mouth
vnto you (though a poore mini-
ster) saying, *If I had not come and
spoken vnto you, you should not haue
had*

had sinne, but now you haue no cloke
for your sinne.

There haue bene also very
good orders set forth as well for
the relieuyng of the pooze, as for
the punishment of sturdy vaga-
bondes whiche loyter in euery
corner as though there were no
officers in the countrey to punish
them, and if any rebuke them for
ranging from place to place, they
will not feare to shake vp such a
one, and say that he taketh more
vpō him then the iustice hymself,
who can see thē, and suffer them.
These are their reportes whiche
are not rashly to be credited. It
is a wonder to consider with
what Difficulty any thing is got-
ten toward the reliefe of y^e pooze,
but how ready a number be to
helpe and relieue sturdy vaga-
bondes,

Sturdy va-
gabondes
not looked
vnto.

A Sermon preached

The poore
neglected &
vagabonds
relieved.

bondes all the worlde may see.
So that if any tything man, or
Constable should accordyng to
his dutie punish such, or go about
to refozme any thyng besides
within his charge, such (though
rare to be foude) are enuied, cha-
lenged, counted very busie and
that they will heape moze vpon
their heades in one yeare, then
they will put of in vij. ac. If you
haue not heard of these thynges,
yet are you sinners before God,
but if you haue heard of the, and
suffer that the same vnreformed,
and now also after that Christ
out of the mouth of his Minister
hath told you, then these wordes
of Christ touche you very neare,
who sayth of you, *If I had not come
and spoken vnto them they might seme
to haue some excuse for their sinne, but
now haue they not to cloke their sinne
with*

with all.

What trayterous practises there haue bene of late among the Papistes to ouerthrow the state, you are not ignorant, and how busie they be on this side, & on the other side the Seas, by seditious billes, & bookes to stirre sedition and tumulte. The consideration wherof hath moued the Queenes Maiestie, and the honorable Counsaile to set forth earnest proclamations for redresse of the same. But what a lamentable case is this (the matter is euē now before you) that a poore man bringyng to light the seditious bookes of a Papist, and deliuering them to the Lord Lieutenant of this shyre, should (being stomaked for this fact) be set by the heeles for matters 4. or five yeare

Trayte-
rous pra-
ctises a-
gainst the
state.

This mat-
ter would
be looked
vpon.

A Sermon preached

yeare old, to be driued from hyg
house, his house to be rifled, he &
his, fayne to forlake the Towne
for feare, the offēder to be in ma-
ner quyet and vntoucht, sayng
bound to appeare nowe before
you. And that that more is: the
Lord Lieutenaunt sendyng hyg
seruaūt and officer (for the tyme)
to take order in this matter, to
be so reuiled, and put in feare of
his lyfe: if you should suffer this
vnpunished (as I know you wil
not) I leaue to the consideration
of your wisdomes, what incon-
ueniences will shortly come to
your selues: what would Mālius
Torq. that noble Romaine do, if
he were now here in this case,
who beyng chief of the army of
the Romaines, & hauyng a some
of a valiāt courage encountryng
with the cōmon enemy, and get-
tyng

Manlius
Torq.

tyng the victory, yet, bicause he attempted the same contrary to his fathers commaundemēt, his father caused his head to be striken from his shoulders, to teache all others how they contemned authoritie. If any should gather by this that I haue sayd, that I went about to moue the Magistrates to crueltie, let the vnderstand, that they are very much deceaued. I know that God from the begynnyng hath abhorred cruel tyrantes, and their tyranny, yea the very endes so horrible of Cayn, Saule, Antiochus, Herod, & sithens the Ascension of Christ of Nero, Caligula, Domitian, Commodus, Decius, Maxentius, Aurelian, Dioclesian, with many other tyrants, may suffice to feare all others from the lyke tyranny. My meaning is that lenitie should not

The feare-
full end of
tyrantes.

A Sermon preached

not put Justice to silence. That
saine that is w^ritten of Domitian
and Nerua, can not to oft be cal-
led to memorie. It is doubted
whether the cruelty of the one, or
foolish pity of the other, did more
harme in the commō wealthe. It
is a miserable common weale
where it is lawfull for a man to
do nothing, but yet more misera-
ble, where euery man may doe
what he liste.

To conclude this second part,
if Papistes, rebels, magistrates,
ministers, &c. can not be excused
by ignorance, as ye heard in the
first part, how much more vaine
shall y^e excuses of such be, as haue
heard the worde, and that Christ
out of hys scriptures, and out of
the mouthes of his ministers so
often tymes haue spoken vnto
them

them: so that now such may assure themselves that they shall haue no cloke for their sinne, but that shall fall vpon them which Luke affirmeth 12. chap. *The seru-
uant which knoweth his maisters will
and doth it not, shalbe beaten with ma-
ny stripes.*

Luk. 12. 47

But now it is tyme that I come to the third and last parte, and so an ende. Our Saviour Christ knew how necessary it was to take frō the vnbeleuing Jewes all excuse, and that they might haue nothing to cloke & to couler their sinne, for he was not ignoraunt how prone man was to sinne, and yet how harde a thyng it was to make hym confesse his sinne, how readie he would be to laye hys sinne vpon others frō himselfe, what clokes
he

The third
note.

A Sermon preached

Man's corrup-
tion in
acknowled-
ging and
confessing
his sinne.

John. 8.

Mat. 25.
44.

he would haue to couler his sin,
a what starting holes to auoyde
the punishment for his sinne. If
ye will learne how harde it was
to make the Iewes cōfesse their
sinne, read y^e 8. of S. Joh. where
you may see, how stoutely they
stoode to the iustifying of them-
selues. And when Christ at the
iudgement shall charge the wic-
ked, that when he was hungry,
they gaue hym no meate. &c.
They shall aske hym when they
sawe him hungry, or thyrsty, and
did not geue hym, as though
Christ vniustly charged them.
But if the fault be so euident,
that it cannot be auoyded, yet
will we couer & hide our selues
wyth figge leaues, and in the
woods, as did our father Adam
before vs, who, when God asked
him

Wm.

him whether he had eaten of the forbidden fruite, and that the thickets coulde no longer hide hym, yet he could be cōtented to laye the faulte to the woman, so well as he loued her. And when God asked the like question of y woman, she posted it of, to the Serpent, and coulde not abyde that the faulte shoulde rest vpon her selfe.

Gene. 3.

The most parte of men (and especially the Papistes) haue a singuler grace in thys, to shift of faultes frō themselves to others, and such as accuse them. And in very deede it is in all places a thyng to common. Let honest men vpon their othes, present great crymes, eyther before the temporall Magistrate, or the spirituall officer, it is oft tymes sene

The grace of Papistes in posting their faults euer vnto others.

C. i.

that

A Sermon preached

that the offenders goe away lesse discouraged, thē those which present them. What encouragemēt is are these to farther iustice, when matters passe so slenderly?

Such fel-
lowes
would
bee had in
remem-
brance.

There was of late a papistical Prelate of thys shyre, who in the Pulpit cast out these, or such like wordes in effect: that where me merueyled he spake no more agaynst the Pope, he did them to vnderstand, that he knewe no hurt by y^e pope, if he were a good man, he prayed God to continue him in his goodnesse, if he were an ill man, he prayed God to amend hym.

What wordes were these of a preacher? what subiect is there so simple which knoweth not, that that vile Italian of Rome is a traitor?

to: to this Realme, who hath of late by his beastly Buls stirred the subiectes of this Realme, to rebell agaynst their lawfull magistrates, and hath sought what he might, and yet doth what hee can, to pull the crowne from the Queene Maiesties head: and is this fit that a Papist which shall speake such wordes of the Pope as I haue recited, or the lyke in effect, shall yet continue not only an ordinary ouer a great multitude, but also a cōmon preacher (such as he is) in this shyre. Such are the subtill shyftes of craftie Papistes, and such a face or cōtēnaunce of honesty they can make with a multitude that shal cleaue vnto thē to speake in their cause: that they are able to cast a myste before the eyes of such, as are to be reuerēced both for their

The popes
Bulles.

Note this
gouernour
of others.

C.ij.

wise

A Sermon preached

wisedome, learnyng, godlynes
and vertue.

But in the tyme of Queene
Mary, if ten Protestantes had
come agaynst one Papiste, could
they haue bene heard though
their matter had bene neuer so
good? and shall now ten Pa-
pistes preuaile against one Pro-
testant, though their matter be
neuer so ill? God forbyd. And
here I haue a sute vnto you. I
beseeche you, ye honorable, and
worshypfull euen for the loue of
God, that ye will haue good re-
gard what witnesses ye admit
in matters of weight, and espe-
cially in Gods cause, when the
controuerisie riseth betwene man
and man: that you will consider
what the men be, and not how
many they be. I will shewe you
a no-

I caueat
for admit-
ting of wit-
nesses.

a notable storie concernyng the
the multitude, or number of wit-
nesses, and how some tyme they
are to be suspected.

There was within my re-
membraunce a Minister of this
shyre, who vnderstandyng what
great disorders there were com-
mōly at these Church Alles vpon
y^e Saboth Day, required his flock
committed to his charge (as hee
was preachyng vnto them) both
in Gods name, y^e Queenes Ma-
iesties name, and the Lord Lieu-
tenauntes name of the countrey,
that they should not assemble the
people together, to offende God
by theyr vngodly behauiours,
but rather geue them selues vpon
the Sabboth Day to serue
God, accordyng to their duties.
The people could in no wise a-
C. liij. way

A Sermon preached

way with this exhortation, but certaine of them, went to the Iustices to desire licence for the commynge together of the people. Sundry of the Iustices both godly and wisely denyed them. At length one Iustice they founde who for good considerations (as he thought) gaue them a licence for certaine dayes. I may not say to commit disorders, for we may well thinke no Iustice would be so vndiscret, but they abused hys authoritie. The Minister seying y great disorders in hys Parish, the next Sabbath day after they had obtained licence, wrote to the Iustice of y same, and wrote nothyng but that he will yet stand to. The Iustice called those that had abused hys authoritie and reprovued them, but now ye shall see the multitude.

There

There were (by the Justices report) 36. whiche offered by vnto hym thei names (which was as much to saye, as that they would haue periured them selues, if the Justice would haue put them to their othes) to testifie agaynst the Minister, that where he complayned of disorder, they to the contrarie affirmed, that there was no disorder at all. And yet it was manifest that the same Sabboth day was shamefully prophaned, with bulbea, cynges, boulynges, drunkennes, dauncynges, and such lyke, in so much as men could not keepe thei seruantes frome lyinge out of thei owne houses the same Sabboth day at night, but yet in the Judgements of. 36. (or there about) there was no hurt, nor disorder at all committed.

C. iij.

This

A Sermon preached

This I haue opened vnto
you, to the ende ye may see what
credit is some tyme to be geuen
to the multitude, if it be a matter
with toucheth the glory of God.
But if ye will credite the multi-
tude, I will shewe how ye may
trust, and credite them without
an othe, and not to be Deceaued.
Where as the Queenes Ma-
iestie in the begynnyng of her
raigne, commaunded and gaue
charge, that the Clergie should
so playnely read the Scriptures
that the people might be edified,
and that the people should so di-
ligently heare the word of God,
that they might make their pro-
fite of the same: if we should sup-
pose the case that a cōtrary com-
maundement had then bene ge-
uen, but by some meane officer,
that the old popish priests (who
foz

for lyuyng sake remayne still in
their benefices) should so mum-
ble out theyr seruice that none
might vnderstand them, or where
there are some whiche can read
playnly, there the multitude to
be so negligent in hearyng, that
they haue for these xij. yeres, lear-
ned nothyng, no not the Lordes
prayer in Englishe, if the multi-
tude would proteste before you
both of popish Priestes, and peo-
ple, that they had folowed and
obserued this contrarye com-
mandemēt, assuredly ye might
credite them, for neither do a nu-
ber of the Popish Clergy so read,
that the people may vnderstand
them, neither do the people make
their profite of that whiche they
heare, where it is playnely read
vnto them. Or, where as the
Queenes Maiestie gaue charge
in

A Sermon preached

Disobediēt
are they
that deface
not all mo-
numentes
of Idola-
try.

in the begynnyng of her raigne,
that all monumentes of Idola-
trie should be defaced, if but a
very meane officer had then ge-
uen a contrarye commaunde-
ment that both the Popishe
Priestes, and Popishe people,
should hide these monumentes
of Idolatrie in theyr houses, and
secrete places, in hope of that day
they looke and long for, ye might
beleue them that they had obser-
ued this contrary commaunde-
ment, with all diligence as it no-
tably falleth out at this present
in prooffe.

But in touchyng the incon-
stancy of the multitude, I except
such among them as feare God,
who notwithstanding be very
few compared to the rest.

I will shewe you but of one startyng hole moze, that the wic- haue to put of sinne, and to a- noyde the punishment of sinne, and so will I commit you vnto God.

When the Jewes were so conuincd in theyr consciences, that they could not put of theyr sinne, and turne it to others, the they deuised a pretie tricke to quyte them selues, whiche was to make God (as it were) theyr feede man. And for the synnes they daylie committed, they would be very busie in offryng Sacrifices, and exercisynge them selues in Ceremonies, thynkyng by the very worke wrought, to bynde God to pardon theyr offences. A lyke kynde of policie was practised by the Papistes in the

An other
vsual tricke
of the Pa-
pistes.

A Sermon preached

the tyme of Poperie to bynde
G O D to forgeue them theyr
sinnes. For where as in the tyme
of Christmasse , the Disorders
were meruelous in those dayes,
(and how it is now God seeth)
at Candlemasse , whiche some
counte the ende of Christmasse,
the papistes would be euen with
God, by that tyme they had offer-
red hym a bzibe , and such a bzibe
(beyng a candle oz taper) as a
bery meane officer, would take
foule scozne of, though he could
do a man but small pleasure in
his sute.

Shroft Twesday was a day
of great glottonie , surffeting , &
dronkenness , but by Althe Wend-
day at night , they thought God
to be in their debt . On Goodfri-
day , they offered vnto Christe
egges

egges, and bacon to be in hys fauour till Easter Day was past. The sinnes committed betwene Easter, and Whytson tyde they were fullye discharged by the pleasaunt walkes, and processions in the rogyng, I should say, Rogation weeke. What offences soeuer happened from that tyme to Midsummer, the fumes of the fricrs dedicated to John, Peter, and Thomas Becket the traytor, consumed them. And as for all disorders from that tyme to the begynnyng of Christmasse agayne, they were in this countrey all roonge away, vpon all Hallounday and all Soules day at night last past.

But bicause the Jewes dyd so shamefully abuse the Sacrifices, and other Ceremonies
which

A Sermon preached

Esay. 1. 11.
and 12. 13.

whiche were ordeyned to put
them in mynde of the promised
seede to come, therefore he reie-
cteth them, and sayth vnto them
in the first of **E**say. What haue
I to do with the multitude of your
Sacrifices? I am full of the burnte
offrynges of Rammes, and of the
fatte of fedde beastes: yea he de-
maundeth of them, who re-
quired those thynges at theyr
handes, that they should come
and tread in hys courtes. He re-
quireth them to bryng no more
oblations to hym in vayne. He
sayth in the 50. **P**sal. That all
the beastes of the forest are hys,
and the beastes on a thousand
mountaines, so that he needeth
not their bribes, he would haue
them to offer vnto hym laude,
and prayse, to call vppon hym.
So sayth God to the brybryng
Da.

Psal. 50.
10. and 11.
12. &c.

Papistes, who requireth these
 thynges at your handes whiche
 I neuer commaunded, as your
 candles at Candlemasse, your
 Popishe penaunce on Ashewens-
 day, your egges, and bacon on
 Goodfriday, your Gospelles at
 superstitious crosses, decked lyke
 Idols, your fires at Midsom-
 mer, & your ringyng at Allhal-
 lountide for all Christian soules?
 I require sayth God a sorrow-
 full and repentaunt hart, to be
 mercyfull to the poore, to shewe
 your selues faythfull &c.

But as the Jewes thought
 them selues by these their practi-
 ses sure inoughe touchyng the
 sauegard of their soules: So had
 they an other shift in a readynes
 to auoyde suche daungers as
 might come towarde their bo-
 dies,

A Sermon preached

Dyes, in offendyng the politike lawes, whiche was to bribe the Officers, Rulers, and Magistrates, and to corrupt them with rewardes. And in dede the Scriptures affirme that bribes are of that strength, that they blynd the wise. And that the Rulers of the Jewes, were geuen much to take bribes, is manifest by all the Prophetes, especially in Esay the first where God sayth. Thy rulers are companions of theeues, euery one loueth giftes, and followeth after rewardes, they iudge not the fatherles, neither doth the widdowes cause come before the. The very heathen dyd abhorre this brybyng, as may appeare by Cambises Cyrus sonne, who though he were a wicked kyng yet he thought it a very semely sight that a brybyng Iudges skinne

Esay. 1. 13.

Cambises
the sonne of
Cyrus.

himne should be hanged ouer the
Judgement seate: and that wise
and prudent Prince Alexander Alexander
Seuerus smothered to death one Seuerus.
that he made most accompt of,
for the lyke offence.

But we do read to the perpetu
all prayse of Lucius Valerius, who Lucius Va
being consull of Rome, and dying lerius.
whylest he was consull, hauing by
his life time & custody of the trea-
sure of Rome, & in his keepynge,
was yet so free from making him-
self by vnlawfull meanes, & hee
was found so poore at his death,
that the charges of hys buriall
was payde by the common peo-
ple. And that of Quintus Cince- Quintus
nius is not to be passed ouer, who Cincenius.
being taken from the ploughe
and made Dictator of Rome: af-
ter that he had gotten many no-

valued

D.i.

ble

A Sermon preached

ble victories, and had done mira-
cleous thynges for the common
weale, returned home to the
plough agayne, from whence he
was taken, so endyng hys lyfe
with a contented mynde as one
not desirous to become riche by
bribes and rewardes.

wherefore, if such as be offensa-
dours in þe cōmon wealthe would
assaye to corrupt those that be in
office, and authority, by their bri-
bes and rewardes to escape con-
digne punishment: Such as be
officers should vse to aunswere
them as **GOD** aunswere the
Jewes, saying: Who requirith
these thynges at your handes? So
should officers say to offendours,
who required these bribes at
your handes? **GOD** sayd to the
Jewes, will I eate the fleshe of
Bulles!

Bulſ! ſo ſhould they ſay, haue
we not Bull bief inough of our
owne ; but that we muſt be cor-
rupted by your bribing Bull bief
or Oren ? be not the hilles and
balies ours : haue not we poſſeſ-
ſions inough to liue by , but that
we muſt beare a pozte by ſuch
vnlawfull meanes to ouerthrow
Juſtice?

If rulers and officers would
thus aunſwere bribe offerers,
then ſhould they auoyde thoſe
punishmēts, and plagues which
God threatneth to fall vpon bri-
bers: and wicked men would not
be ſo bold to ſinne in hope to eſ-
cape puniſhment by geuyng of
bribes.

The tyme calleth vpon me to
make an end, you haue heard vpon

D.ij.

pon

A Sermon preached

pon this first Argument of Christ
these three notes: first that igno-
rance can excuse no man. Sec-
condly, that where the word hath
sounded, there man can haue no
cloke for his sinne. Thirdly, you
haue heard how loth man is to
acknowledge his sinne, how he
putteth of hys sinne to others, &
what shiftes he hath to qualify, &
to escape punishment for hys
sinne.

Now let vs besech almighty
God our heauēly Father to illu-
minate our mindes with his ho-
ly spirite, and that you which be
the Magistrates, and fathers of
this our countrey, may so quyte
your selues in your offices, that
negligence be not layd to your
charges, at that great and dread
full day, but rather that you fo-
low

lowyng the steppes of that good
steward in the Gospell , vnto
whom Christ sayd , O thou good
seruaunt thou hast bene faythfull
in litle , I will therfore make thee a
ruler ouer much : so you after that
you haue passed your liues here,
in holynes and righteousnes, the
Lorde Jesus at hys commyng
may draw you vp vnto hym,
and so raigne with hym, to
whom with the Father
and the holy Ghost, be
all prayse, honor, and
glory. Amen.



at Hingham, Mass.

I have the pleasure to inform you that your letter of the 10th inst. has been received. I will endeavor to send you some more of the same kind as soon as possible. I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. B. French

